



U.S. Department of Justice
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NEWS RELEASE

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Immigration Judge Takes Oath of Office In Maryland

BALTIMORE – Elizabeth A. Kessler was sworn in today as an immigration judge during an investiture ceremony at 2 p.m. at the George H. Fallon Federal Building. Acting Chief Immigration Judge David L. Neal, from the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) in Falls Church, Va., administered the oath of office.

Judge Kessler joins the ranks of more than 200 immigration judges located in 53 immigration courts throughout the nation. Immigration judges are responsible for conducting formal administrative proceedings to determine whether foreign-born individuals who are charged with violations of federal immigration law should be removed from the United States or may be granted relief from removal. Immigration judges decide each case independently and their decisions are final unless appealed or certified to the Board of Immigration Appeals. In the past year, immigration judges completed more than 300,000 matters. They also are authorized to administer oaths of citizenship to candidates for naturalization.

Elizabeth A. Kessler was appointed as an immigration judge in January 2006. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1987 from Columbia University, a Master of Arts degree in international relations in 1992 from Yale Graduate School, and a Juris Doctorate in 1992 from Yale Law School. From November 2003 to January 2006, Judge Kessler served as a deputy associate attorney general at the Department of Justice (DOJ). She previously served as a deputy general counsel for the U.S. Department of Energy. Judge Kessler served as general counsel with the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, Subcommittee on Immigration, in Washington, D.C., from January 1997 to 1999, and as counsel on the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee from January 1995 to January 1997. From 1993 to 1994, she was an attorney with the Civil Division, Appellate Staff, at DOJ, and a Bristow Fellow with the Office of the Solicitor General. Judge Kessler served as a law clerk with Judge Richard J. Cardamone, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, from 1992 to 1993. She is a member of both the Maryland and District of Columbia Bars.

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EOIR is responsible for adjudicating immigration cases. Specifically, under delegated authority from the Attorney General, EOIR interprets and administers the federal immigration laws by conducting immigration court proceedings, appellate reviews, and administrative hearings. EOIR consists of three components: the Office of the Chief Immigration Judge, which is responsible for managing the numerous immigration courts located throughout the United States where immigration judges adjudicate individual cases; the Board of Immigration Appeals, which primarily conducts appellate reviews of immigration judge decisions; and the Office of the Chief Administrative Hearing Officer, which adjudicates immigration-related employment cases. EOIR is committed to providing the fair, expeditious, and uniform application of the nation's immigration laws in all cases.

Information about EOIR immigration proceedings is available on EOIR's website at <http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir/press/subject.htm>.